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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Association of African Tax Administrators
Second Meeting of the Executive Committee

Addis Ababa, 22-24 March 1982

REPORT OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN TAX ADMINISTRATORS

A. ORGANIZATION AND ATTENDANCE

1. The second meeting of the Executive Committee of the Association of African Tax Administrators (AATA) was held at Africa Hall, Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), from 22 to 24 March 1982. The meeting was attended by representatives of Egypt, (representing the North African Subregional Committee), the Gambia (representing the West African Subregional Committee), the United Republic of Cameroon (representing the Central African Subregional Committee) and Togo (Vice-Chairman of AATA). Also in attendance as an observer was Ethiopia. Cabled apologies for not attending the meeting were received from Malawi (representing the Eastern and Southern African Subregional Committee).

B. AGENDA

After considering the provisional agenda presented by the secretariat, the Executive Committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Draft report on the activities of AATA, including financial statements for the biennium March 1980 - February 1982
4. (a) Proposed structure of the AATA secretariat;
   (b) Scale of salaries and allowances for staff;
5. Draft programme of work and biennial budget, March 1982 - February 1984
6. Proposals for the appointment of the Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General of AATA
7. (a) Choice of the headquarters of AATA
   (b) Draft headquarters agreement
8. Draft rules governing the financial activities of the Association and financial rules of the secretariat
9. Proposed member States' contributions to the AATA biennial budget, March 1982 - February 1984

C. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS

Opening addresses

3. The meeting was opened on 22 March 1982 by Mr. Soulemane Abdoulaye (Togo), Vice-Chairman of AATA, who chaired the meeting in the absence of Mr. Edwin Yarngo (Liberia), Chairman. In his opening statement, the Vice-Chairman, speaking on behalf of ECA and on his own behalf, welcomed members of the Executive Committee to the second meeting of the Committee and expressed regret at the absence of the Chairman of AATA. The observer for Ethiopia, speaking on behalf of his Government which was hosting the first General Meeting of AATA also welcomed members of the Executive Committee to Addis Ababa and wished them a pleasant stay and successful deliberations.

Draft report on the activities of AATA, including financial statements for the biennium March 1980 - February 1982 (item 3)

4. A representative of the secretariat introduced the document entitled "Draft report on the activities of the Association of African Tax Administrators, including the financial statement for the biennium March 1980 to February 1982". He highlighted the work scheduled to be done by the Executive Committee during its second meeting and the activities that had been carried out by the subregional committees and the secretariat during the biennium March 1980 - February 1982. He also drew attention to the growth of members of AATA during the biennium and underlined the failure of some members of AATA to pay their contributions to the AATA biennial budget for March 1980 to February 1982.

5. In discussing the activities of the subregional committees, the Chairman of the West African Subregional Committee explained the efforts which he had made to organize a seminar for the West African subregion, but the seminar had not taken place because of the difficulty in securing a venue and also because of changes in the Governments of two member States in the subregion. The representative of the United Republic of Cameroon Chairman of the Central African Subregional Committee, stated that it had been not possible to convene a meeting of the Central African Subregional Committee because he had not been informed of the member States in the subregion which had joined the Association. The Chairman of the North African Subregional Committee explained that because of difficulties of language and interpretation services it had not been possible to convene a meeting of member States in the North African subregion.

6. With regard to the membership of AATA, the Committee requested the secretariat that in future information about AATA meetings as well as decisions taken at such meetings should be communicated to all member States which were members of ECA and of OAU. In that way, the Committee believed that the non-member States would be able to know about the Association and thus be encouraged to join.

7. Regarding the method of payment of contributions by member States, the Committee requested the interim secretariat to communicate to States members of AATA the Association's bank account number which was operated by ECA at the Africa Hall Branch of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia. For those member States which had not yet paid their contributions to the biennial budget for March 1980 to February 1982, the Committee requested payment. The Committee was also informed that Nigeria, Togo, the United Republic of Cameroon, Algeria and the Central African Republic had paid their contributions but those payments were not reflected in the March 1980 - February 1982 financial statement as the amounts had not yet been received by the secretariat.

8. The draft report was adopted for submission to the General Assembly.

(a) Proposed structure of the AATA Secretariat

(b) Scale of salaries and allowances for staff (item 4)

9. A representative of the secretariat introduced document PAMI/AUD/1/81 entitled "Proposed structure of AATA secretariat; and staff scale of salaries and allowances".

10. The Committee recommended that the organizational structure of the AATA secretariat should clearly indicate that the Deputy Secretary-General was the second in hierarchy in the secretariat. The Committee also decided that in the initial years of the Secretariat, the Deputy Secretary-General should head, in addition to his duties as assistant to the Secretary-General, the Training, Research and Publication Department.

11. The members of the Executive Committee in considering the scale of salaries and allowances to be recommended to the first General Assembly for adoption, reviewed the scales of salaries and allowances of the staff of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and the African Development Bank. In the light of their examination of those three scales of salaries and allowances, and taking into consideration the future financial capability of the Association, the Executive Committee decided to recommend that the scale of salaries and allowances of the staff of AATA secretariat should be based on the scale of salaries and allowances of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

Proposals for the appointment of Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General of AATA (item 5)

12. The members of the Executive Committee took note of document PAMI/AUD/3/81 presented by the representative of the secretariat. The Committee, in adopting the document for submission to the first General Assembly, decided that the proposals should be for the appointment of both the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General. With regard to the language qualifications, the Committee decided that, since at the inaugural meeting of the Association in Monrovia in 1980 it had been agreed that French and English should be the official languages of the Association, the language requirements for the posts of Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General should be French and English.

13. The Executive Committee recommended that any expenses involved in advertising the vacancy announcements should be borne by the member States undertaking to advertize the posts.

Draft programme of work and operating budget of the Association of African Tax Administrators, March 1982 - February 1984 (item 5)

14. Under agenda item 5, the Committee considered document PAMI/AUD/6/81. The Committee reviewed the activities programmed for the biennium March 1980 - February 1982 but not implemented. The Committee then agreed that, since the technical themes which were to be discussed during the first General Assembly meeting had not been discussed, some of the technical themes should be the subject of technical discussion during the second General Assembly meeting to be held in 1984. The topics which were selected during the inaugural meeting held in 1980 for discussion at the first General Assembly meeting were therefore deferred to the second General Assembly meeting to be held in 1984: They were:

a) Issues of tax fraud and evasion;

b) Promotion of tax awareness;

c) Techniques of tax legislation.

15. With regard to the organization, management and staffing of tax departments scheduled to be discussed during the First AATA Technical Conference to be held in 1983, the Committee agreed that the term "Tax Departments" refered to both Inland Revenue and Customs Departments.

16. In discussing the biennial budget proposals, the Committee observed that there was need to amend article 13 of the Constitution of the Association in order to allow the Association to bear the expenses of the members of the Executive Committee attending meetings of the Executive Committee. That would not only lessen the financial burden on States members of the Executive Committee but would also serve to encourage their active participation and involvement in planning of the activities of the Association. In that connexion, the Committee expressed the hope that a member State would propose such an amendment to the Constitution to be considered during the second General Assembly Meeting of the Association in 1984.

17. Document PAMI/BUD/6/81 as amended was adopted for submission to the General Assembly.

(a) Choice of the Headquarters of AATA

(b) Draft headquarters agreement (item 7)

18. A representative of the secretariat introduced document PAMI/BUD/4/81 and drew attention to the decision taken at the inaugural meeting of the Association of African Tax Administrators (AATA) directing the secretariat to write to all States members of the Economic Commission for Africa and of the Organization of African Unity in order to ascertain which member State would wish to host the headquarters of the Association. Positive responses had been received from only Ethiopia and Uganda.

19. The Executive Committee in deciding which one of the two should be recommended for selection by the General Assembly to host the headquarters of the Association, was guided by the quality of offer of facilities and privileges that the two member States were prepared to grant to the Association. Uganda had not offered any facilities and privileges. Ethiopia, on the other hand, indicated that it would provide an appropriate site if the Association decided to build its own offices or do all it could to facilitate and expedite the renting of offices; extend to the Association such privileges and immunities as it granted to similar international institutions already in the country, details of which could be negotiated. In the light of the offer of facilities and privileges that Ethiopia was prepared to extend to the Association, the members of the Executive Committee decided to recommend Ethiopia to the General Assembly as the member State to host the headquarters of the Association.

20. Members of the Executive Committee reviewed the draft headquarters agreement, article by article, to see whether the agreement would serve the best interests of the Association. They made observations on the following articles of the draft Agreement:

(a) Article I , section 1, relating to the definition of "Officials of the Association";

(b) Article II, section (b);

(c) Article IV, section 9 (e) and (f);

(d) Article VIII, section 14 (c);

(e) Article X, section 20.

The Committee agreed that section 20 should be reformulated.

Considering the observations made on the above articles of the Agreement and because of time constraint, it was decided that the draft headquarters agreement should be reconsidered by the Executive Committee at its next meeting which would be held in 1983 before submission to the General Assembly for its approval and adoption. The Committee further decided that the draft headquarters agreement would be submitted to the first General Assembly meeting for information only.

21. The Committee requested the secretariat to provide for the information of the members of the Executive Committee photocopies of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations which was cited in article VII of the draft headquarters agreement.

Draft rules governing the financial activities of the Association and financial rules of the secretariat (item 8)

22. The draft rules governing the financial activities of the Association and financial rules of the secretariat were reviewed by members of the Executive Committee, rule by rule. Rules 2, 4 and 5 were amended. A new rule 29 was added to make provision for auditing of the accounts of the Association.

Proposed member States' contributions to AATA biennial budget, March 1982 - February 1984 (item 9)

23. The members of the Executive Committee while accepting the principle that member States' contributions to AATA biennial budget for March 1982 - February 1984, should be calculated on the criteria (the CAU index and voluntary contributions which had been agreed upon by the General Assembly at its inaugural meeting held in Monrovia, Liberia, in 1980, requested the secretariat to review the percentage contributions of member States with a lower limit of 0.5 per cent and an upper limit of 10 per cent in column iv of table II in document PAM/3UD/7/81. The review of the percentages should apply to the United Republic of Cameroon, Ethiopia, Zaire and Zambia. The representative of Egypt requested that consideration should be given to per capita income instead of GDP for determining each member State's capability for paying its contribution to AATA.

Date and place of the next meeting of the Executive Committee

24. It was decided that the secretariat should negotiate with member States to host the next meeting of the Executive Committee scheduled to be held in October/November 1983.

Presentation of the report and closure of the meeting

25. The draft report of the meeting was reviewed, amended and adopted. The meeting was then declared closed.